

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated November 9, 2005. Claims 42 to 59 are pending in the application, of which Claims 42, 50, 58 and 59 are independent. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claim 59 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 because the claimed invention allegedly is directed to non-statutory subject matter. Claim 59 has been amended to clarify that it is directed to a program stored on a computer-readable storage medium. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

Claims 42, 46, 47, 49, 50, 54, 55 and 57 to 59 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,088,120 (Shibusawa) in view of well-known prior art. Claims 43, 44, 51 and 52 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Shibusawa in view of well-known prior art, and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 5,450,571 (Rosekran). Claims 45 and 53 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Shibusawa in view of well-known prior art and Rosekran, and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 5,287,194 (Lobiondo). Claims 48 and 56 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Shibusawa in view of well-known prior art and Rosekran, and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 6,686,964 (Makishima).

Turning to specific claim language, amended independent Claim 42 is directed to a print processing method which is executed by a print system to which plural print apparatuses and an information processing apparatus are connected. The method includes: an environment setting step of setting a print environment of print data, the environment setting step including a selecting step of selecting at least two or more print apparatuses from among the plural print apparatuses; and a generating step of, based on printer capability description information in which a maximum number of capability of a function of each of the plural print apparatuses is

described and the print environment set in the environment setting step, adding the maximum numbers of the capabilities of the functions of the print apparatuses selected in the environment setting step to set a renewal maximum number. The renewal maximum number exceeds any of the maximum number of capabilities of a function of each of the plural print apparatuses, and generates complex printer capability description information in which the set renewal maximum number is described.

The present invention as recited in amended independent Claim 42 features adding the maximum numbers of the capabilities of the functions of selected print apparatuses to set a renewal maximum number, based on the maximum number of the capability of the function of each of the plural print apparatuses and the print environment of print data. Accordingly when the plural print apparatuses are selected, the capabilities of the respective functions of the selected print apparatuses are added. Thus, for example, if there is a print job requesting a large number of copies, a user can still issue a print instruction for the print job even if the number of copies exceeds the maximum number of copies of any single printing apparatus. Consequently, the more the number of selected print apparatuses is, the more it is possible to increase the number of printable print jobs. As a result, it is possible to eliminate the inconvenience that the user has to issue the print instruction plural times to execute print job.

In contrast, Shibusawa is directed to a print system in which a logical printer is constituted by plural physical printers. More specifically, in Shibusawa, the attribute information data of the respective physical printers are calculated through a logical sum (set sum) or a logical product (set product) and the calculated data are set as the attribute information of the logical printer.

The attribute information disclosed in Shibusawa represents kinds of paper, but does not represent number related to printing. Moreover, the respective values A5, A4, B4 and A3 are the print attribute value of either a physical printer “a” or a physical printer “b” and not of a logical printer. Furthermore, as used in Shibusawa, “sum” indicates the logical sum (set sum). According to Shibusawa if the maximum output number of the physical printer “a” is “10” and the maximum output number of the physical printer “b” is “20”, then the maximum output number of the logical printer is “20”, or the maximum of the individual physical printers. However, according to the present invention as recited in Claims 42 it is possible to set the print number $10 + 20 = 30$ as the maximum output number. In addition, the table 153 shown as shown in Fig. 4 of Shibusawa merely shows to a user which tray of which printer the print output was performed, but does not allow a user to allocate one print job to the plurality of trays.

Furthermore, Rosekran is directed to a network print system in which plural client terminals and plural printers are mutually connected. More specifically, in Rosekran a job ticket for each client is displayed on the UI screen of each relevant client terminal.

In addition, Lobiondo is directed to a print system in which plural printers and a scheduler are connected to a network. In Lobiondo, the relevant scheduler manages the requested print job so as to complete the printing on time. That is, if it is expected that the printing does not complete on time by a single printer, the scheduler allocates the print job to a plurality of printers.

Finally, Makishima is directed to a digital camera by which a taken image can be designated for printing and the set print designation information can be confirmed. More specifically, in Makishima if the print designation information includes print number (i.e., the number of prints), the total print number, the maximum permissible print number (print

limitation number) can be displayed on the display portion of the digital camera. An "upper-limit value" as disclosed in Makishima is the limit value of the total print number when printing, that is, it limits the print job when the requested print number exceeds the set upper-limit value.

However, neither Shibusawa, Rosekran, Lobiondo nor Makishima, neither alone nor in combination, disclose or suggest adding the maximum numbers of the capabilities of the functions of a plurality of print apparatuses selected in an environment setting step to set a renewal maximum number wherein the renewal maximum number exceeds any of the maximum number of capabilities of a function of each of the plural print apparatuses and generating a complex printer capability description information in which the set renewal maximum number is described.

In light of the deficiencies of Shibusawa, Rosekran, Lobiondo and Makishima as discussed above, Applicant submits that amended independent Claim 42 is now in condition for allowance and respectfully requests same.

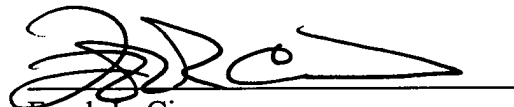
Amended independent Claims 50, 58 and 59 are directed to an information processing apparatus, a print system and a program stored on a computer-readable storage medium, respectively, substantially in accordance with the method of Claim 42. Accordingly, Applicant submits that Claims 50, 58 and 59 are also now in condition for allowance and respectfully requests same.

The other pending claims in this application are each dependent from the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for the same reasons. Because each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual consideration of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, CA office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Frank L. Cire', written over a horizontal line.

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